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Making sense of the world

THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

A NEW POPE

For the first time in history, an American is chosen to lead the Catholic Church p2

DID YOU KNOW?

- Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was elected.
- He is 69 years old and grew up in Chicago.
- He will be known as Pope Leo XIV.

DID YOU KNOW?
The first pope named Leo served between the years 440 and 461. He was the 45th pope and became known for his commitment to peace.

Pope Leo XIV addresses the crowd in St. Peter's Square on May 8.

A gift from Pope Francis

Pope Francis left instructions for one of his official vehicles—known as a "popemobile"—to be converted into a mobile health unit for the children of Gaza, in the Middle East. The vehicle will have medical equipment to provide basic care, including first aid and vaccines. Officials don't yet know when it will be ready.

First American chosen as pope

On May 8, Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost was chosen as the pope, the leader of the worldwide Catholic Church and its 1.4 billion followers. Popes traditionally choose a new name when they are elected, and he will be known as Pope Leo XIV. He is the first pope in the 2,000-year history of the church to be born in the US and the first from the religion's Augustinian order, which prioritizes bringing people together and caring for those in need. Leo, age 69, replaces Pope Francis, who died on April 21 at age 88.

Who is the new pope?

Leo, the 267th pope, was born in 1955 in Chicago, Illinois. His father was an educator, his mother was a librarian, and he has two older brothers. His ancestors were Creole (people of French, Spanish, and African descent) from New Orleans, Louisiana. He earned a degree in mathematics from Villanova University, pursued his religious education at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and became a priest in 1982 at age 27. He is fluent in English, Spanish, Italian, and French. After his selection as pope, family members and friends shared that Leo plays the games Wordle and Words with Friends and is a fan of the Chicago White Sox baseball team.

A US flag near the Vatican after the pope was chosen

What did he do after becoming a priest?

In 1985, Leo began serving as a priest in Peru. He worked in the South American country for more than 20 years, becoming a dual citizen of the US and Peru and rising to the role of bishop. In 2023, Francis named Leo to the high-ranking position of cardinal and appointed him to an important role at the Vatican (global church headquarters in Rome, Italy). Throughout his career, Leo has pursued many of the same priorities Francis did, including helping the poor and protecting the environment.

How was the pope selected?

The complex process of selecting the new pope, called a conclave, began on May 7. During a conclave, cardinals remain in seclusion to vote for a new leader, who needs a two-thirds majority to be elected. After each vote, the cardinals send a message to the outside world by burning pellets treated with chemicals that emit black smoke if they have not chosen the new pope or white smoke if they have. On the evening of May 8, white smoke appeared, and Leo soon appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica (church) at the Vatican, where he greeted thousands of cheering followers who had gathered in the square below. Leo then gave his first public address as pope. "Peace be with you," he said. "I would like this greeting of peace to resound in your hearts, in your families, among all people, wherever they may be, in every nation, and throughout the world."

How did people react?

People celebrated in Peru, in the US, and around the world. Many Catholics and non-Catholics spoke of the new pope's potential to bring people together. "Leo XIV has already stated the most crucial issue: building bridges, world peace, opening ourselves to welcoming all people," a Zen Buddhist priest from Portugal told *The Guardian* newspaper. "I'm not religious, but I was so deeply moved and I felt love and hope at that moment," said a resident of Los Angeles, California. Leo's brothers, Louis and John Prevost, told reporters that the new pope had been devoted to his faith from a young age. "We used to tease him all the time—you're going to be the pope one day," said Louis. "Here we are."

What will happen next?

Leo will be formally installed as pope during his first public Mass at St. Peter's Square on May 18. Political and religious leaders from around the world will attend. During the Mass, Leo will receive the pallium, a white woolen band decorated with crosses that symbolizes his leadership.

New chancellor is named in Germany

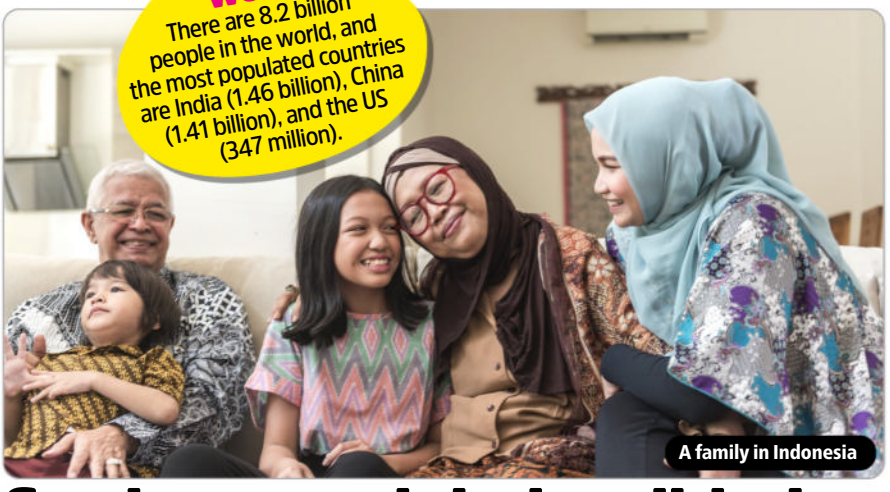
After two rounds of voting on May 6, Friedrich Merz became Germany's new chancellor (a top leader). Merz was expected to easily win a vote in Parliament (similar to Congress) but, in a surprise outcome, fell six votes short of a majority in the first round of voting. He gained a majority in a second round by nine votes. It was the first time since 1949 that a candidate lost the initial vote but still won.

In Germany, citizens vote for political parties, not candidates. Members of the party that wins the most seats in Parliament then elect a chancellor. In Merz's case, he is the head of the Christian Democrats party (CDU/CSU), which has formed a coalition with the Social Democrats party.

Merz, a former corporate lawyer, faces challenges including the economy, immigration, and political tensions within Germany and Europe. He must also manage the relationship between Germany and the US, which are allies and trading partners. In addition to a chancellor, Germany also has a president, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. Merz will work closely with Steinmeier to lead the nation.

Friedrich Merz

WOW! There are 8.2 billion people in the world, and the most populated countries are India (1.46 billion), China (1.41 billion), and the US (347 million).


A family in Indonesia

Study rates global well-being

A new study has revealed the locations where people are most satisfied with their lives. The Global Flourishing Study surveyed more than 200,000 people speaking 40 languages in 22 countries and one territory.

The study was led by researchers from Harvard University in Massachusetts and Baylor University in Texas. They defined "flourishing" as "a multidimensional state of well-being that involves positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment." The researchers looked at six factors: people's happiness and life satisfaction, physical and mental health, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, close social relationships, and financial and material stability.

Researchers were surprised to find that lower- and middle-income countries scored higher than wealthy ones. Indonesia topped the list, with people there reporting high scores in areas like meaning, purpose, and relationships. The next countries were Mexico and the Philippines, where people reported strong family ties and community support. High-income countries ranked lower. The US was 15th, and Sweden was 18th.

Men and women reported similar levels of flourishing in most countries. In some nations, like the US, Argentina, and Australia, younger people reported lower scores than those over age 50. And people who attend religious services at least once a week had higher scores.

"People all over the world want many of the same basic things: to be happy, healthy, connected, and safe," the researchers said. They will re-survey participants annually and release more results in the coming years.

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

DOUBLE THE JOY

A set of pied tamarin twins were born at the Philadelphia Zoo in Pennsylvania. The species is critically endangered in the wild, and the zoo is "overjoyed to have...beautiful babies for guests to fall in love with," said a spokesperson.

The twins

HONORING A FIRST LADY

A postage stamp featuring former First Lady Barbara Bush (right) was unveiled at the White House. Bush, who died in 2018, was the wife of former President George H.W. Bush and the mother of President George W. Bush. She was an advocate for literacy and for people with medical conditions known as HIV and AIDS.

GREAT GAMES

The World Video Game Hall of Fame announced four honorees for 2025: arcade game Defender, released in 1981; Tamagotchi, the digital pets that came out in 1996; GoldenEye 007, a multiplayer game released in 1997; and Quake, a 3D game from 1996. Based in Rochester, New York, the Hall honors games that have influenced the industry and pop culture.

A Tamagotchi

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES (2); DISNEY; SCRIPPS NATIONAL BEE; ON THIS PAGE: USPS; ALAMY; PHILADELPHIA ZOO; GETTY IMAGES (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2); COURTESY OF CARITAS

Staffers at ProPublica after learning they had won a Pulitzer

WINNING TRADITIONS
The New York Times has received the most Pulitzer Prizes, with 139, followed by The Washington Post with 78.

Pronouncing the award

When the Pulitzer Prizes are announced, there is often debate on how to say "Pulitzer." Although many people think it's pronounced "pew-lit-sir" because some words that start with "pu" are spoken that way, that is not accurate. The correct way to say it is "pull-it-sir," according to the organization's official website.

Pulitzer Prize winners awarded for 2025

The winners of the 2025 Pulitzer Prizes, the nation's top awards for journalism, were announced on May 5. The prizes, given this year for the 109th time, also honor excellence in the arts, including books, drama, and music.

What are the Pulitzer Prizes?

There are 23 Pulitzers given out each year, 15 in journalism and eight in the arts. The prizes were established by Joseph Pulitzer (1847–1911), one of the most influential journalists of his time. He was the publisher of *The New York World* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and when he died he left money to establish the prizes to provide an incentive for excellence in journalism. Today, the prizes are administered by Columbia University. Winners are chosen by experts in the field and receive $15,000 each. The Public Service winner for journalism receives a gold medal (shown in the box above).

Who won the journalism awards?

The New York Times won the most Pulitzers this year with four, including the award for International Reporting. It also won for Breaking News Photography for Doug Mills' sequence of photos of the attempt to assassinate (kill for political reasons) Donald Trump, who was then a Presidential candidate, in July 2024. *The Washington Post* won in the Breaking News Reporting category for its coverage of the same subject. The prize for Public Service, the highest honor among the Pulitzers, went to ProPublica for a series of articles about women's healthcare. It was the second consecutive year ProPublica won the Public Service prize and its eighth Pulitzer overall. The prize for National Reporting went to *The Wall Street Journal* for chronicling the actions of Elon Musk, the world's richest man who is now an adviser in the Trump administration.

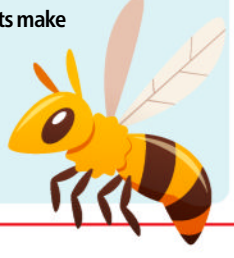
Who were some of the arts winners?

The Fiction prize went to the novel *James* by Percival Everett, which reimagines Mark Twain's classic *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the point of view of the enslaved man Jim. The prize for Drama went to *Purpose* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, a play about an influential Black family. *Sky Islands*, a composition by Susie Ibarra that was inspired by rainforests in the Philippines, won for Music. *New and Selected Poems* by Marie Howe won in the Poetry category.

WORD OF THE WEEK

WASP

The word "wasp" is believed to come from an ancient root that meant "to weave." The connection is the shape of a wasp's nest, which the insects make by chewing up wood into a papery substance and "weaving" it into many layers.



THE WEEK IN HISTORY

May 18, 1953

First female pilot breaks sound barrier

On May 18, 1953, Jacqueline Cochran (1906–1980) became the first woman to break the sound barrier by flying her plane faster than the speed of sound at high altitude. Cochran helped train female pilots during World War II (1939–1945). In 1964, she beat her own record, flying at twice the speed of sound. When she died in 1980, she held the most aviation records of any person, male or female.

Jacqueline Cochran

Bill Gates

Major pledge for charity funding

Bill Gates said he will donate the rest of his fortune, about $107 billion, to the Gates Foundation, which he founded with his former wife, Melinda French Gates, in 2000. The pledge is among the largest philanthropic donations ever given and will allow the foundation to spend more than $200 billion over the next 20 years to improve healthcare, reduce poverty, and expand education access worldwide. The foundation will close in 2045, earlier than planned.

Two top winners

Big night for country music artists

The 60th annual Academy of Country Music Awards, hosted by country music legend Reba McEntire, were televised from the Ford Center in Frisco, Texas, on May 8. Ella Langley (above left) was nominated for eight awards and won five, the most of any artist, including New Female Artist of the Year. Lainey Wilson (above right) won four awards, including Entertainer of the Year.

A dressed-up dog

Pet Gala held in New York City

On May 5, New York University hosted its annual Pet Gala to support rescue shelters and raise awareness of pet adoption. Modeled after the Met Gala—a major event in the fashion world held the same night, both in New York City—the event features pets walking a red carpet while wearing stylish outfits and accessories. One cat named Mister Tuts wore a velvet cape and gown.

Hall of Fame Olympians named

On May 6, the new members of the US Olympic & Paralympic Hall of Fame were announced. The class of 2025 will include eight individual Olympic and Paralympic athletes, two teams, and one special contributor, among others. Together they have earned the US a combined 51 Olympic medals, including 35 golds.

The US Olympic & Paralympic Hall of Fame was created in 1979 to celebrate the achievements of the nation's top athletes in the Summer and Winter Games. The first class, inducted in 1983, included runner Jesse Owens and figure skater Peggy Fleming. Since then, the Hall has honored 18 classes with 210 inductees, the last of which was selected in 2022. The class of 2025 was determined by a voting process that includes Olympians and Paralympians, as well as online voting, with nearly 300,000 votes cast by fans.

The inductees include gymnast Gabby Douglas, who in 2012 became the first Black woman to win all-around gold in gymnastics; Allyson Felix, the most accomplished athlete in the history of track and field, capturing 31 medals in the Olympics and world championships; alpine skier Bode Miller, who led Team USA to a record eight alpine medals at the 2010 Winter Games; and track and field athlete Marla Runyan, who made history as the first person to compete in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games, amassing six Paralympic medals, five of them gold.

Nike founder Phil Knight

The 2010 four-man bobsled team and 2004 women's wheelchair basketball team, both of which won gold medals, were also named to the class of 2025. In addition, the Hall of Fame will induct Phil Knight, the founder of Nike, as a special contributor for being a "transformative force in the world of sport."

The class of 2025 will be inducted during a ceremony on July 12 at the US Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Baseball-loving birds cause 'duck delay' in Minor League game" *UPI*

GETTY IMAGES (8); HANNAH LA FOLLETTE RYAN; ON LEFT PAGE: SARAHBETH MANEY/PROPUBLICA; GETTY IMAGES (2)

Around the world

European gray wolves

Strasbourg, France
Rules on wolf protection change

The European Parliament voted on May 8 to change rules that protect wolves. The European Parliament makes laws for the European Union (EU, a group of 27 countries). Europe has more than 20,000 wolves. Wildlife groups say the wolves are good for the environment, but farmers say they attack their animals. Wolves were "strictly protected" but will now be "protected," giving EU countries more freedom to control populations.

The Swiss city of Zurich

Switzerland
Drought warning system launched

On May 8, Swiss authorities launched a new warning system for droughts (long periods without rain). The national drought platform, which can be viewed online, combines different sets of data to summarize the country's current drought situation and provide forecasts for the coming weeks. Predicting where a drought will occur should enable the public to take action to reduce its impact, such as closing fountains to save water.

A scorpion caught in Brazil

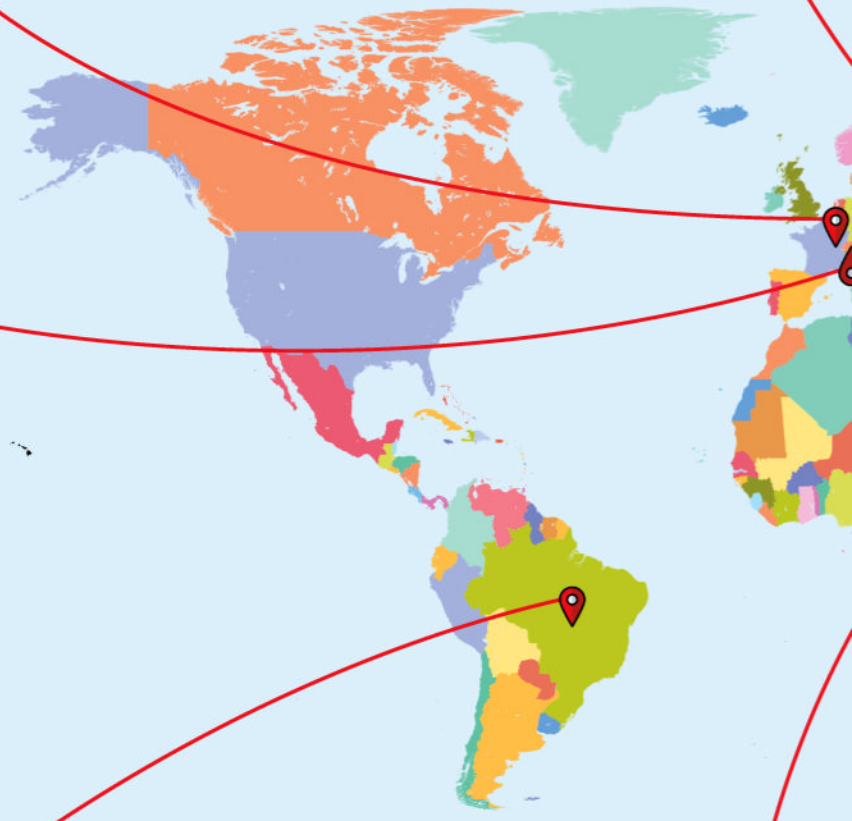
Brazil
Scorpion numbers on the rise

Research has revealed that scorpion populations are growing in Brazilian cities. Between 2014 and 2023, the number of reported scorpion stings increased by 155%. Experts think scorpions are thriving as cities quickly expand, creating more areas where they like to live. This includes sewers, which scorpions enjoy because they're warm, humid, and full of prey, such as cockroaches.

Afghanistan
Chess games banned

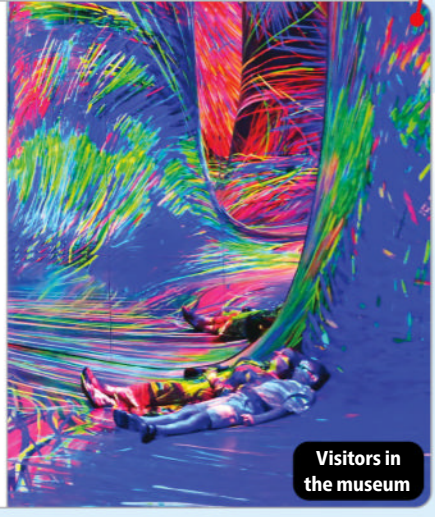
The Afghan government, which is led by an extremist group called the Taliban, has banned people from playing chess until further notice. Officials are worried that chess could be a source of gambling (playing games for the chance to win money). Gambling is not allowed under the Taliban government's rules.

Afghans playing chess



Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Interactive museum opens

An international group of artists called teamLab has opened an interactive art museum in Abu Dhabi. Inside are 25 digital art exhibits, many of which react to a visitor's touch. The museum is divided into a dry zone and a wet zone. Visitors have to take off their shoes and socks in the wet zone, where the floor is covered in shallow water and they can wade through floating sculptures.


Visitors in the museum

GETTY IMAGES (6); ALAMY (3); NASA

Troops march for Victory Day.

Moscow, Russia
Victory Day is observed

Russian president Vladimir Putin led celebrations in Moscow on May 9 for Victory Day, which marks the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II (1939–45). Events included a parade of Russian troops and a display of weapons. More than 20 world leaders attended, including Chinese president Xi Jinping and Slovakian prime minister Robert Fico.

Children in a parade

Cheung Chau, Hong Kong
Bun festival draws crowds

Thousands of people went to Cheung Chau from May 3 to 6 to celebrate the Bun Festival, a tradition that started more than 100 years ago to ward off evil spirits. The festival includes feasts and a colorful parade featuring children. People also enjoy white steamed buns marked with the words "peace" and "safety." The highlight is the Bun Scrambling Competition, where people climb a tower of steamed buns and try to grab as many as possible.

People line up at the Expo.

Osaka, Japan
Event accepts 85-year-old ticket

A visitor recently entered the 2025 World Expo using a ticket that was 85 years old. The huge, six-month exhibition brings together technology from all over the world. Organizers are admitting people who still have tickets for the 1940 Grand International Exposition of Japan, which was canceled due to World War II. One man had bought an old ticket to use as a decoration and exchanged it for two passes to attend the current Expo.

Jakarta, Indonesia
Spacecraft crashes

On May 10, a spacecraft from the Soviet Union (former nation made up of Russia and other countries) crashed down after orbiting Earth for 53 years. The Kosmos 482 probe launched in 1972 with a mission to land on Venus as part of the Venera program. But after a rocket booster failed, the 1,190-pound probe got stuck in space and slowly fell back toward Earth. According to Russia's space agency, Roscosmos, it splashed into the Indian Ocean west of Jakarta.

Kosmos 482's twin probe, Venera 8

Pakistanis cheer after the ceasefire.

India and Pakistan
Countries agree to stop airstrikes

A ceasefire (pause in fighting) between India and Pakistan was announced on May 10. The two countries had been launching airstrikes at each other since May 7. India launched the first one in response to an April 22 attack by gunmen in the Kashmir region, which it claims Pakistan was involved in. The countries have gone to war over control of Kashmir three times since 1947.

Is it OK for kids to order lunch to school?

Food delivery apps make life easier, but some say they don't belong in schools.

What you need to know

- **Across the US, more than 95,000 schools serve school lunch to 29.6 million students a day.**
- **Since 2012, US schools have been required to offer vegetables, beans, peas, and lentils with lunch.**
- **A 2023 survey of teens found that 64% said school meals tasted good, but about 20% were unlikely to eat them because of poor quality.**
- **In 2024, more than 173 million Americans used food delivery apps, like DoorDash and Uber Eats.**

FIT FOR A ROYAL
Legend has it that the first pizza delivery was in 1889 in Italy, when a chef brought one to the king and queen.

School lunches have come a long way in recent years, with the addition of plenty of fruits, vegetables, and vegetarian options. Not every student enjoys them, though, and some are going to great lengths to have a better midday meal. While many kids bring lunch from home, others are turning to food delivery services, like Uber Eats and DoorDash, and ordering restaurant meals right to the school's front door. Some people think that's OK, as long as kids are getting food and nutrients. But others say having sushi or salads delivered isn't a good idea. What do you think? Is it OK for kids to order lunch to school?

Yes—it's a matter of choice

Kids need to eat a full, healthy meal in order to stay focused, energetic, and able to learn at school. What better way to ensure they get a good lunch than by letting them choose and order what they really want? Ordering lunch to school isn't that different from bringing lunch from home. And for many kids it's not just about preferences. A lot of students have food allergies or they're strict vegetarians or vegans. School cafeterias try, but they can't always provide options for them. And finally, food apps support local restaurants. More customers, including students, means more orders. Everyone wins.

No—it's totally unfair

Letting students order lunch to school sets a bad example because it discourages kids from eating the food that's available to them in the cafeteria. It's also not fair to other students who might not have the option of getting any food they want delivered. Kids shouldn't be spending time placing orders and going to grab their food anyway. School is for learning and socializing with their peers, not having a gourmet meal. Plus, someone has to monitor delivery people on school grounds. Who will do that—the teachers or front office staff? They already have very busy jobs, and this isn't a good use of their time.

YES Three reasons it is OK for kids to order lunch to school

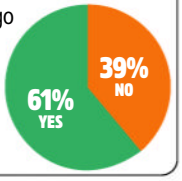
1. **Ordering lunch at school gives kids more control over their food and ensures that they'll eat a good meal.**
2. **Many kids have dietary restrictions, and the cafeteria can't always meet their needs. Delivery is a good alternative.**
3. **Food delivery apps are an important source of business for local restaurants.**

NO Three reasons it is not OK for kids to order lunch to school

1. **Ordering food when school meals are available is wasteful and unfair to kids who don't have that option.**
2. **Students don't go to school to be on their phones ordering food—they go to learn.**
3. **Teachers and staff don't have time to help with food deliveries in the course of an already busy school day.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if crew socks are better than no-show socks. Most of you like your footwear to go above your ankles: 61% said yes, and 39% said no.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think it is OK for kids to order lunch to school or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

GETTY IMAGES

Making art of the past

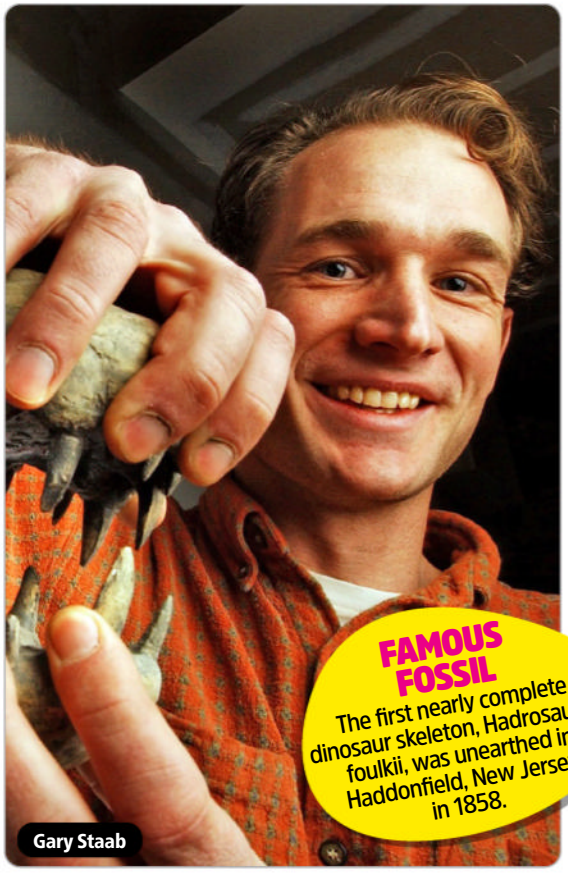
Gary Staab offers a look back in time with his sculptures of prehistoric life.

As a paleoartist, Gary Staab has spent his career bringing extinct creatures to life. His realistic creations of dinosaurs, sharks, and mummies are displayed in more than 50 museums around the world. For a recent project, he designed the dinosaur replicas at the Edelman Fossil Park and Museum of Rowan University in New Jersey, which opened in March. As Staab told *The Week Junior*, "I try to put the flesh back on the bones of extinct animals."

The artist's work

Growing up in Nebraska, Staab was drawn to art and nature, exploring the wide-open landscapes around him and developing a fascination with animal biology and anatomy. After earning a dual degree in art and science at Hastings College, he interned at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, and the Natural History Museum in London, UK, before landing his first job at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in Colorado.

Staab's work blends fossil science with artistic techniques, re-creating everything from tiny bugs to 75-foot-long dinosaurs. He works closely with paleontologists and archaeologists, even joining them on digs, to sculpt lifelike models. For the Edelman Museum, Staab's team carefully designed life-size dinosaurs, with some pieces featuring up to 1,000 scales applied by hand. One of Staab's favorite parts of the process is imagining how these creatures behaved and looked long ago. "As you dig down through the layers, you're traveling back in time," he said. To aspiring artists, Staab said, "Keep making stuff all the time—that is how you learn the best."



Gary Staab

FAMOUS FOSSIL

The first nearly complete dinosaur skeleton, Hadrosaurus foulkii, was unearthed in Haddonfield, New Jersey, in 1858.

Protecting her home

Activist Mari Luz Canaquiri Murayari has won the 2025 Goldman Environmental Prize, one of the world's top environmental awards. She is from the Kukama, an Indigenous group (first to inhabit the area) in Peru, near the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon's Marañón River is sacred to the Kukama and vital for their food, water, and transport. She led a campaign for years in Peru's courts to stop oil drilling by the river, eventually securing legal rights and making it the first river in Peru to be protected from harm such as pollution.

Mari Luz Canaquiri Murayari

Sarah Jessica Parker

A love for literature

Sarah Jessica Parker is having a standout year as a literary champion, recently receiving the Literary Service Award from PEN America, a literary advocacy organization. Parker is an award-winning actress who has worked in Broadway, TV, and film. Known for her passion for books, she started her publishing imprint, SJP Lit, in 2022 to spotlight new American authors. The award honors her work uplifting underrepresented voices. Also this year, Parker produced a documentary about book bans and served as one of five judges for the prestigious Booker Prize for English-language fiction.

OVERHEARD

"The big message of sharing is happiness."

Chef José Andrés, founder of World Central Kitchen, on his nearly 15 years of work feeding people around the world in times of crisis

GETTY IMAGES (3); GOLDMAN ENVIRONMENTAL PRIZE; INSTAGRAM/STAAB STUDIOS

CITY LIFE
Los Angeles, California, is the only major US city with big cats living in the wild within the city limits.

Deer were spotted grazing in March.

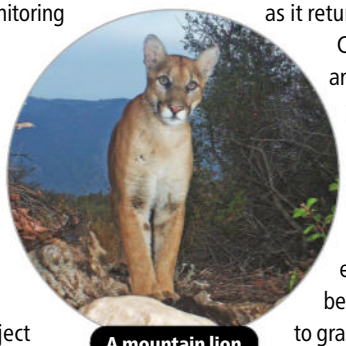
Elephants stick together

When California was hit by a 5.2 magnitude earthquake on April 14, three female elephants at the San Diego Zoo quickly formed a protective circle around two calves. Known as an "alert circle" (below), this is a common response when elephants perceive a threat to the herd. "They take care of each other," an expert told NPR.

Wildlife returning after California fires

A few months after wildfires swept through Los Angeles, California, plants and animals have begun returning to parts of the city that had suffered great damage. One group of scientists and volunteers is monitoring this triumphant recovery in the Altadena foothills.

The Chaney Trail Corridor Project was founded by Kristen Ochoa, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and focuses on a wilderness area near Eaton Canyon. Ochoa and other project members had installed cameras to monitor wildlife before the Eaton Fire reached the area in January, destroying plants and causing animals to flee. After the fire died out, Ochoa's team set up new cameras to replace equipment that had been destroyed. These cameras have helped them document wildlife as it returns to the area.



A mountain lion

Coyotes were among the first animals to come back. These predators are thought to thrive after wildfires because it is easier for them to catch prey amid less vegetation. Next, grass and plants such as elderberry and black sage began to regrow, attracting deer to graze. Bobcats, squirrels, and owls have also returned, and researchers found that 13 of the 15 known ant colonies in the area survived the fire.

A California newt, which typically lives in Altadena from November through April, was spotted in late March. One of the most notable sightings took place on March 26, when a mountain lion appeared on the footage for the first time since the fires. A week later, a female mountain lion was seen with two cubs.

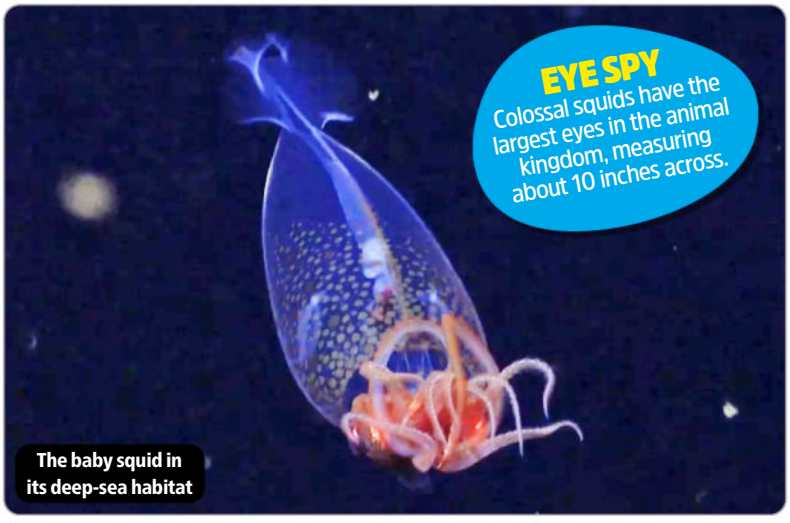
The new information the team is gathering offers special research opportunities. For instance, Joseph Curti, a UCLA biologist who studies bats, is now collecting data on how bats respond to wildfires. The Chaney Trail Corridor Project will also study bird activity in the area from before and after the fire. "We are pretty excited about what we can potentially learn about nature coming back," Ochoa told the news outlet LAist. "Nature is resilient and, for me, it helps me

PLACE OF THE WEEK

Outer Banks, North Carolina

The Outer Banks in North Carolina is made up of more than 100 miles of shoreline on the Atlantic Coast. Wild boars, marsh rabbits, warblers, hawks, and wrens live there, along with wild horses known as "banker ponies" that roam free on the beach. In Jockey's Ridge State Park, visitors can find the tallest natural sand dunes on the East Coast. They reach up to 100 feet high. The Outer Banks is also close to the Currituck Sound and the Kitty Hawk Woods Coastal Reserve. The reserve is made up of nearly 1,900 acres of protected forests, swamps, and marshes.

One of the wild horses



The baby squid in its deep-sea habitat

Colossal squid captured on camera

Scientists in the South Atlantic Ocean have caught something never before seen on film: a colossal squid. These elusive sea creatures are one of the world's largest invertebrates (animals without a backbone). They typically live at extreme depths in Antarctic waters, making it hard for scientists to see them in their natural habitat.

Colossal squids were first discovered in 1925 after one was eaten by a sperm whale, but only eight sightings have been reported in 100 years. Researchers from the Schmidt Ocean Institute, who were searching for marine life, used a remote-operated vehicle with a camera to film the squid about 2,000 feet below the surface. Most colossal squids are thought to live at even greater depths.

Colossal squids can grow up to 23 feet long and weigh as much as 1,100 pounds. This squid was about a foot long and see-through, which means it was a juvenile. Scientists are thrilled at this opportunity to study the deep-sea creature in the wild. Researcher Kat Bolstad said, "I actually love that this is our first glimpse of what will become a true giant."

Animal of the week: Woodrat

Experts from 10 states are working to study and save woodrats, whose numbers have dropped over the past 30 years. Because the secretive creatures are difficult to observe in the wild, researchers are luring the rats with a peanut butter mixture.

- **LIFE SPAN:** Three years or more in the wild
- **HABITAT:** Rocky cliffs, mountains, forests, caves
- **SIZE:** 15 to 18 inches, including the tail
- **DIET:** Leaves, stems, nuts, berries, mushrooms
- **FUN FACT:** They are also called pack rats because they collect objects like shells, rocks, and paper.

Good week / Bad week

Sea turtles

A new study found that endangered sea turtles are recovering worldwide after many years of conservation efforts. In most of the areas experts studied, threats facing the reptiles are declining and turtle populations are rising.

Earth's lakes

Research shows that oxygen levels are dropping sharply in the world's lakes. A study found that oxygen levels had declined in 83% of lakes, and scientists say most of this loss is caused by climate change. Low oxygen levels can kill wildlife.

Ask an expert

"If flamingos don't eat the shrimp that turns them pink, what color will they be?" Penelope, 9, North Carolina

Cody Hickman
Avian care expert,
Brookfield Zoo Chicago

If flamingos don't eat foods like shrimp, algae, or brine flies, their feathers will be pale gray or white. The pink color comes from pigments like canthaxanthin that are found in these foods. Flamingos have a specialized beak designed for this diet. Without it, they can't thrive.

Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to hello@theweekjunior.com.
Find out more about Brookfield Zoo Chicago at brookfieldzoo.org.

SUBASTIAN/ROV SUBASTIAN/SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; GETTY IMAGES (3); ON LEFT PAGE: KRISTEN OCHOA / CHANEY TRAIL CORRIDOR PROJECT); SAN DIEGO ZOO; GETTY IMAGES (3)

A thrilling contest for

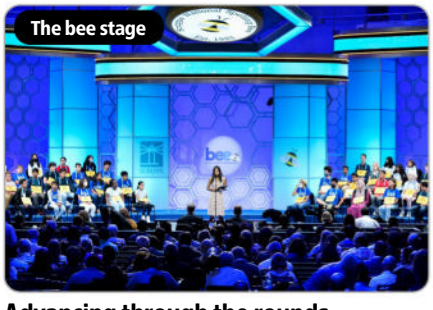
Every year, champion spellers compete for the highest honor—the Scripps Cup.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee, the nation's most prestigious spelling competition, turns 100 years old this year.

Ed Sullivan with a winner in 1954

History of the bee

In 1925, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, a Kentucky newspaper and the host of a successful state spelling bee, invited other newspapers to join them in hosting a national spelling bee. Nine US newspapers sponsored the event. More than 2 million schoolchildren participated in local bees until the field narrowed to nine contestants—one for each newspaper—who competed in Washington, DC. In 1941, the Scripps newspaper company took over sponsorship of the bee. It aired on national TV for the first time in 1946, and winners in the 1950s appeared on a popular variety program, *The Ed Sullivan Show*. The Merriam-Webster dictionary became the official referee of spelling words in 1958.



The bee stage

Advancing through the rounds

The goal of the Scripps bee is to enhance students' spelling skills, expand their vocabulary, and foster a love of language and learning. Today, about 11 million students from more than 25,000 schools compete in local spelling bees. Contestants can be from the US, its territories, and around the world. Winners can advance to county or district competitions, then move on to regional or statewide levels. These champions then advance to the final competition: the Scripps National Spelling Bee. In 2024, 245 contestants made it to this bee, the highest number since 2019.

BEHIND THE BUZZ
Prominent documentary films about the Scripps bee include Spellbound (2002) and Spelling the Dream (2020).

Memorable bee moments

1925

The winner of the first bee was Frank Neuhauser, an 11-year-old from Kentucky. His winning word was "gladiolus," a type of flower. He won $500 in gold pieces.

1998

Jody-Anne Maxwell, age 12 and from Jamaica, became the bee's first-ever Black winner and first non-American winner. She won after spelling "chiaroscurist," which is an artist who uses light and shadow to add depth to their work.

SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE (10); GETTY IMAGES (4); AP PHOTO (2); LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; SHUTTERSTOCK

word whizzes

DOUBLE THE FUN
Six times during Scripps bee history, two spellers have been named co-champions.

Scenes from the bee over the years

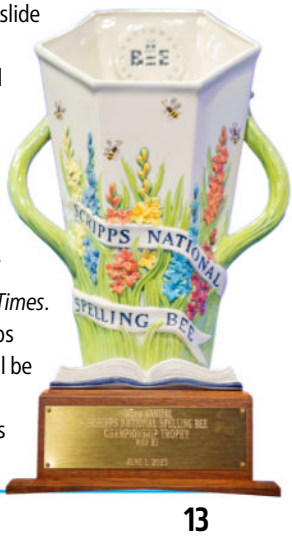
Jacques Bailly (left) in 1980

How the competition works

Since 2011, the bee has taken place at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland, outside Washington, DC. The competition is open to students who are under age 15 or who have not yet completed 8th grade. Dr. Jacques Bailly, who won the 1980 Scripps bee as an eighth grader, has been the bee's official pronouncer since 2003. Spellers have 90 seconds to first pronounce the word, spell it, and pronounce it one more time. If they spell it correctly, they remain in the bee. If they do not, they are eliminated from the competition. The rounds continue until one speller is champion. If no champion emerges, a lightning round—in which spellers compete to spell the most words correctly in 90 seconds—determines the winner.

Winning the bee

The bee champion receives a $50,000 cash prize from Scripps, a commemorative medal, and the Scripps Cup trophy. Merriam-Webster also gives the winner a collection of reference books and a $2,500 cash prize. In 2024, Bruhat Soma, a seventh grader from Tampa, Florida, won the bee in a dramatic spell-off round, the second in the bee's history. Soma correctly spelled 29 words in 90 seconds. His winning word was "abseil," which means to slide down a rock or cliff using a rope. He had competed before, having tied for 163rd place in 2022 and tied for 74th place in 2023. "Instead of going down, I decided to be really motivated by that," Soma told *The New York Times*. This year, the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee will be held from May 27 to 29, with semifinals and finals airing live on ION.



2019

Eight contestants were named co-winners at this bee because the judges ran out of challenging words. Afterward, the competition organizers expanded their word list to make sure this would not happen again.

2022

Three years ago, Harini Logan, a 14-year-old from Texas, became the bee champion in the first-ever lightning-round tiebreaker. She accurately spelled 22 words in 90 seconds, with "moorhen," a marsh bird, as her final winning word.

The digital re-creation of an ancient woman's face

ROYAL SON
In Greek mythology, the city of Mycenae was built by Perseus, whose parents were the god Zeus and a princess named Danae.

Bronze Age face revealed

The face of a royal woman who lived in Greece in the 1500s BCE or 1600s BCE, during the Bronze Age, has been re-created using digital technology. The woman's remains were first discovered in the 1950s at Mycenae, an ancient city that had a fortress at its center and is now an important historical site. In Greek mythology, Mycenae was ruled by King Agamemnon, who led his soldiers in a legendary battle called the Trojan War.

In the 1980s, experts made a clay model of what they thought she might have looked like, based on her skull. For the most recent reconstruction, a digital artist named Juanjo Ortega G used the clay model as a starting point. The artist also used additional information, including DNA (chemical that carries information about how a living thing grows and develops) and ancient art, to produce the most realistic digital image possible.

"For the first time since she was laid beneath the ground over 3,500 years ago, we are able to gaze into the actual face of a Bronze Age royal woman," Emily Hauser, a historian and expert on ancient Greece who led the project, told *The Observer* newspaper.

Ancient art of a Mycenaean woman

The woman, who was buried in a royal cemetery, was in her mid-30s when she died. She was buried next to a man, and though experts initially thought they were a husband and wife, DNA analysis revealed that they were brother and sister. This indicates that the woman was buried there because of the status of her family, rather than her marriage.

A death mask (image of a person made soon after they have died) made from a metal called electrum—which is a naturally occurring mixture of gold and silver—was buried with the woman. Such masks were often created for important people because they were believed to offer protection in the afterlife.

The royal woman was also buried with a collection of weapons, including three swords. Experts first assumed the swords belonged to her brother, but now they believe they were hers. Hauser said the link between the woman and these weapons suggests there could be more to learn about how women were involved in war at that time. The reconstruction, she said, allows "the real women of ancient history to step out of the shadows."

Looking into the past

The Yayoi woman

For the first time, experts have created a model of a woman (above) who lived during the Yayoi Period in Japan, about 1,800 years ago. They re-created her face based on bones found at Aoya Kamijichi Historical Park, an important archaeological site in what is now the city of Tottori, Japan. The team previously re-created the faces of a man and boy from the site.

The woman is believed to have been in her 30s or 40s when she died. Her face was restored by Tatsuhiko Hamada, who previously re-created the man's face. Hamada envisioned her as having a long face, pale skin, thick hair, and full eyebrows. Speaking about the models that have been created so far, he said, "All three together will help get a picture of how people back then lived in this place."

Extinct species of wasp found in amber

A team of scientists has discovered an extinct species of wasp that was preserved in amber for 99 million years. Amber is a liquid made by a tree that has hardened over a long time.

Sixteen wasps were found in Myanmar, in Southeast Asia. But these were no ordinary wasps. The team was surprised to discover that the insects had a structure on their bodies that looked like a Venus flytrap. These are plants with leaves that snap shut, trapping insects inside, which the plants slowly consume and use as food.

FLYING SPECIES
Scientists estimate that there are more than 100,000 species of wasps around the world.

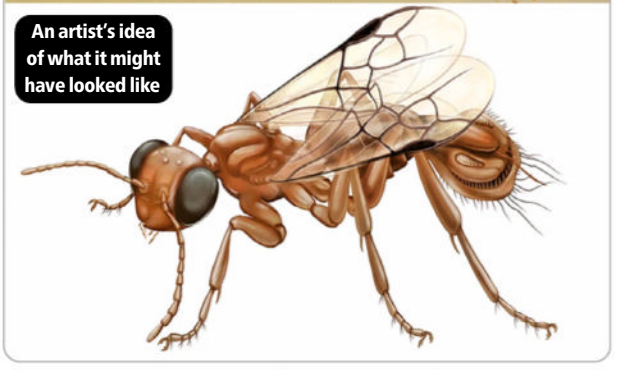
However, the team thinks these wasps had a different use for their traps. Instead of consuming their prey, they may have kept another insect trapped, then laid an egg in it or on it. When a baby wasp hatched, it could feed on the trapped insect. When one animal feeds on another living creature, the behavior is called "parasitic."

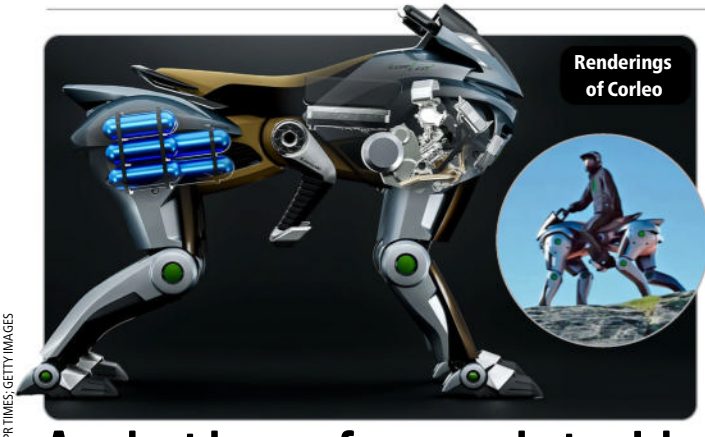
The researchers don't think this wasp chased its prey. Instead, it would have waited until an unsuspecting smaller insect landed in its trap, which would then have snapped shut.

Other parasitic wasps, like cuckoo wasps, exist today. But none of them use traps in this way. Experts have described the newly discovered wasp as "peculiar-looking" and a "weirdo."

The new species is called Sirenobethylus charybdis. The name is inspired by Charybdis, a sea monster in Greek mythology that was said to suck in water, creating whirlpools and dragging ships down to their doom.

The extinct wasp in amber


An artist's idea of what it might have looked like


Renderings of Corleo

A robot horse for people to ride

Some robots look like humans or dogs, and now there's one that's designed to look—and be ridden—like a horse. A concept for the robot, named Corleo, was recently unveiled by engineers in Japan.

Corleo's designers said the robot will be able to gallop through a forest, scale rocky cliffs, bound through snow, wade across a stream, and more. It will use artificial intelligence (AI, when a computer learns like a human) to respond to the movements of the person riding it, just like a real horse would.

Each of Corleo's legs will move independently, helping it absorb shocks. The robot will have "hooves" made of rubber to give it sturdy footing and keep it from slipping.

Corleo's designers said it will be powered with hydrogen, which does not release any emissions that harm the environment. They hope to have a real model up and running in the coming years.

AMAZING INVENTION

A spice device that customizes flavor

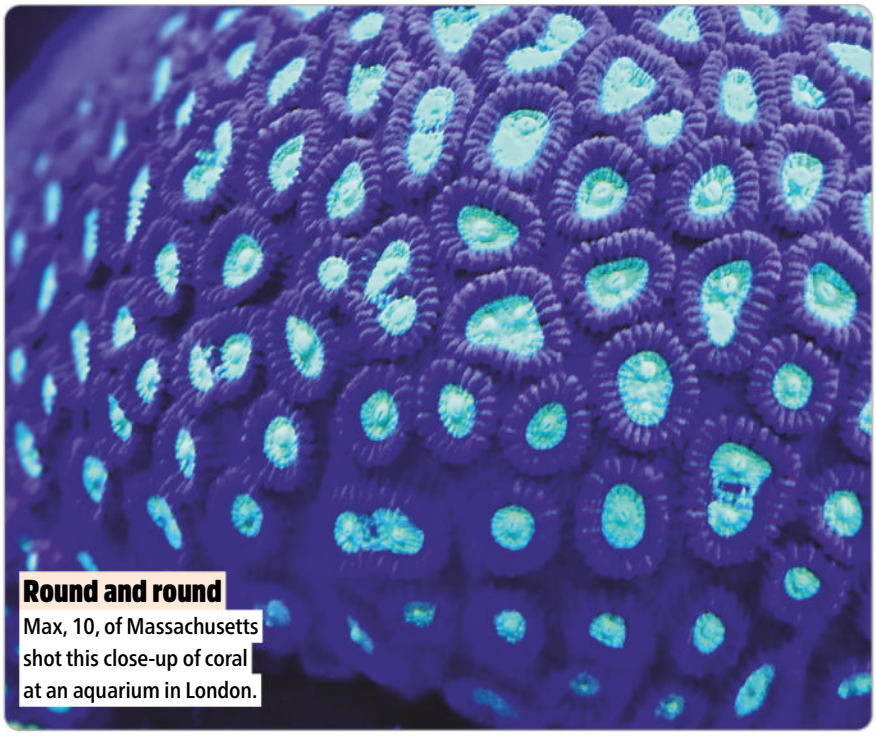
Spicerr

A smart spice dispenser called Spicerr lets home cooks select a recipe, then mixes up and dispenses a precise seasoning blend to flavor it. The device also uses AI to learn a user's taste preferences and personalizes flavor mixes for them.

Spicerr holds six airtight capsules of herbs or spices. They come pre-filled with high-end seasonings or empty for the user to fill with their own ingredients. The capsules are easily swapped out, making mealtime options endless. Spicerr is set to be available later this year.

QIONG WU; KAWASAKI HEAVY INDUSTRIES (2); SPICERR; ON LEFT PAGE: JUANJO ORTEGA G.; PR TIMES; GETTY IMAGES

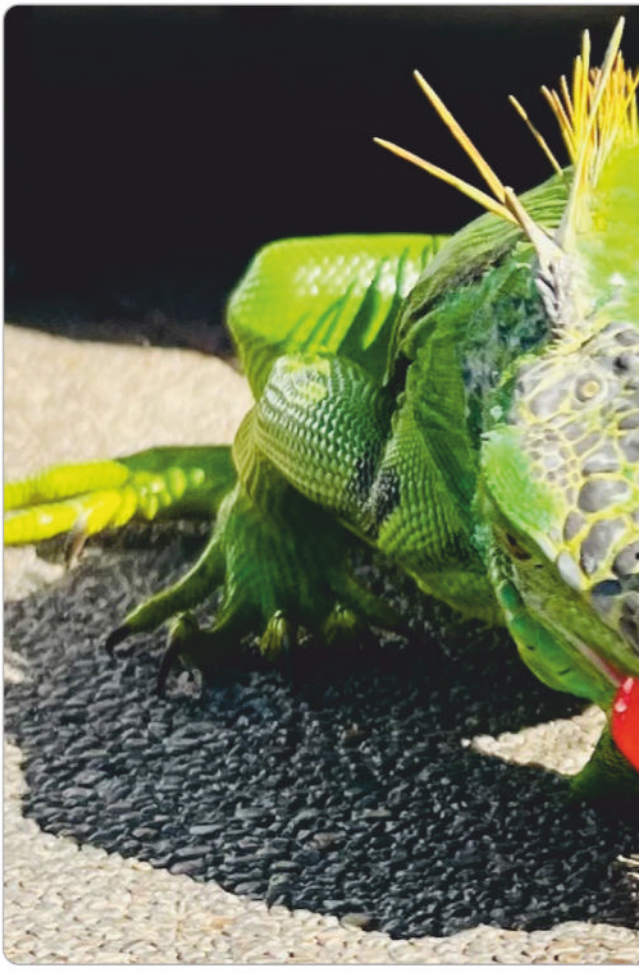
Reader photos of the week



Round and round
Max, 10, of Massachusetts shot this close-up of coral at an aquarium in London.

Sky light
This photo of a sunset was taken by Ansley, 14, of Florida.

Looking up
Jasper, 10, of New York snapped this image while on vacation in Arizona.



CAROLINE; WYATT; ZADE; MAX; JASPER; ANSLEY

Reader photos of the week

Bugging out
Wyatt, 11, of Massachusetts captured this photograph of a grasshopper.

Snack break
Zadie, 11, of California took this portrait of a giant iguana in Mexico.

Bright bloom
This picture of a flower was taken by Caroline, 8, of Virginia.

Elly De La Cruz of the Cincinnati Reds on May 10

FUN FACT
Josh and Jace Jung, brothers who both play for the MLB, faced off in a Mother's Day game on May 11, and their mom, Mary, threw out the first pitch.

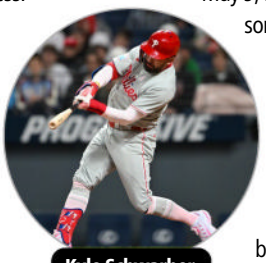
Early standouts

MLB.com recently asked experts to choose early Most Valuable Player (MVP) picks. Aaron Judge of the New York Yankees (shown above) was the unanimous AL winner. In the NL, the favorites were Pete Alonso of the New York Mets and Fernando Tatis Jr. of the San Diego Padres.

Success and struggles for MLB teams

The 2025 MLB (Major League Baseball) regular season is in full swing. While several teams are off to impressive starts, others have already made big changes in hopes of finding success.

Many of the teams with the best records so far are in the National League (NL). On May 7, the Los Angeles Dodgers, the 2024 World Series Champions, became the first team this season to reach 25 wins. The New York Mets and San Diego Padres have also been racking up wins. In the American League (AL), the best team as of May 13 was the Detroit Tigers. Two of their players, Riley Greene and Spencer Torkelson, have combined to hit 19 home runs over the team's first 41 games.



Kyle Schwarber

The Seattle Mariners are another AL team that has been playing well. Heading into games against the Toronto Blue Jays the weekend of May 9, they had won nine series in a row, something they had not accomplished since 2001. However, the Blue Jays broke the streak and won all three games in the series. Despite the losses, the Mariners remained in first place in the AL West .

For two teams, victories have been hard to get. On May 8, the Pittsburgh Pirates fired their manager, Derek Shelton, after compiling a 12–26 record. The only team having a worse season has been the Colorado Rockies. They had a 6–33 record after 39 games. They lost to the Padres, 21–0, on May 10, and even though they won, 9–3, the next day, their manager, Bud Black, was fired.

The Dodgers had an exciting game on May 9 against the Arizona Diamondbacks. Arizona led, 11–8, at the top of the ninth inning, but Los Angeles had an explosive comeback. It was capped off by a three-run homer by superstar Shohei Ohtani, giving the Dodgers a 14–11 win.

The next day, the Cincinnati Reds had a 10-run first inning in a game against the Houston Astros. It was the most runs the Reds have scored in the first inning since 1989. They went on to win, 13–9.

On May 11, Philadelphia Phillies star Kyle Schwarber hit two home runs in his team's 3–0 win over the Cleveland Guardians. It was his 14th homer of the season. As of May 12, he was tied for the most home runs in the league.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

On May 11, the Montreal Victoire beat the Ottawa Charge, 3–2, in Game 2 of their best-of-five-games PWHL (Professional Women's Hockey League) semifinal series. The game required four overtime periods and lasted more than five hours. It is now the longest game in PWHL history. The Victoire's Catherine Dubois scored the winning goal, and their goaltender Ann-Renée Desbiens made 63 saves in the game.

The Stanford University women's water polo team

CLUB SOCCER

In Spain's La Liga, Barcelona beat Real Madrid, 4–3, on May 11, in a rivalry matchup known as El Clásico. Raphinha scored two goals for Barcelona, who are expected to win the La Liga title.

COLLEGE WATER POLO

On May 11, the Stanford University women's team defeated the University of Southern California, 11–7, to win the NCAA women's water polo championship. It is the program's 10th title and third in the past four seasons.

FAST FEET At the 2024 Olympics, Team USA won gold medals in all three of the 4x400-meter relays.

The US 4x400-meter mixed relay team

Sprinters race for relay medals

Many of the world's fastest runners gathered in Guangzhou, China, for the 2025 World Athletics Relays on May 10 and 11. It was an important competition because the top 14 teams in each event qualified for the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, Japan, in September.

The events at the meet were the men's and women's 4x100-meter and 4x400-meter relays, a mixed 4x400, and the debut of a mixed 4x100. The mixed events have teams of two men and two women. The new race will not be featured at worlds, but it will be at the 2028 Olympics.

Speed is key in relays, and teammates also must pass a baton as they run. In a heat of the mixed 4x100, the US team had a poor handoff and failed to make the finals, which Team Canada won. Still, Team USA had a successful weekend.

The 4x400 mixed relay team of Chris Robinson, Courtney Okolo, Johnnie Blockburger, and Lynna Irby-Jackson won gold by nearly three seconds over Australia, who took silver.

The women's 4x400 final was thrilling. The US had the lead for most of the third leg, but Spain pulled ahead before the last handoff. American Bailey Lear took back the lead but was eventually overtaken by Spain's Blanca Hervas, so the US ended up with the silver. The men's 4x100 team also took silver in their event, finishing .05 seconds behind South Africa. In the 4x100 women's race, the US team narrowly missed out on a medal of their own. They finished in fourth place, .05 seconds behind Jamaica, who won bronze.

Based on their times, all five US teams qualified for the World Athletics Championships.

COACH OF THE WEEK

Instructor's Name: **Julie Knowles**

Activity: **Ballet**

"Every student at Collierville Arts Academy is *so* lucky to have Mrs. Julie as their teacher. She is super kind and always helps you if you are struggling. She also gives us out-of-class dance opportunities. She has helped me become a better dancer over the five years I've been with her. I always look forward to class. She is the most outstanding ballet teacher ever! Everyone appreciates her *so* much! We all love you, Mrs. Julie!" Clara, 11, Tennessee

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com.* Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Andon Thomas

AGE: 20 SPORT: FOOTBALL
TEAM: US MILITARY ACADEMY (ARMY)

Team effort I started playing flag football when I was 7 or 8. I absolutely loved it. I was probably 10 when I started playing tackle football. I think it's awesome how the sport brings together people from different backgrounds who create a bond through the workouts and the wins and losses.

Training plan Our team recently started spring ball, and we practice three or four times a week. In the regular season, it's five or six times. In the offseason, we run, do sprints and conditioning, and hit the weight room.

Support system When I have a hard time, talking to my friends helps. This school is hard and puts you through a lot, but they're going through the same things. I also call my parents. They have a lot of wisdom.

Cool habit On game day, one thing I always do after I wake up is take a shower that I make ice cold for the last two minutes.

Major moments In 2023, we beat Navy and Air Force in the same year, so we won the Commander-in-Chief's (CIC) trophy. That's been my biggest accomplishment. The second biggest was winning our conference championship last year.

Big goals I want to win the CIC again. After college, it'd be great to play at the next level, but I came here to be in the Army. I look forward to it.

Wise words Hard work pays off. It may not be apparent right away—it wasn't for me—but if you keep your head down, stay humble, and work hard, everything's going to take care of itself.

GETTY IMAGES; TULANE ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4)

BIG HIT
The original *Lilo & Stitch* was nominated for an Academy Award for best animated feature in 2003.

Maia Kealoha (right) in Lilo & Stitch

Live-action Lilo & Stitch movie

The popular animated film about a girl in Hawaii who meets a mischievous alien has been remade.

Since 2002, Disney's animated film *Lilo & Stitch* has charmed audiences with the tale of an unlikely friendship between a young girl and a spirited space alien. Now there is a new live-action version of the movie that tells the same story but with human actors and a computer-generated Stitch. It arrives in theaters on May 23.

As fans of the first film know, Stitch is a destructive monster created by an evil scientist. After he steals a space vehicle, he crash-lands in Hawaii. Lilo, a lonely orphan being raised by her sister, Nani, mistakes the creature for a dog and adopts him. As she teaches him about *'ohana* (the Hawaiian word for family), the galaxy police arrive in the area and are set on capturing the monster at any cost.

Chris Sanders

The new movie was filmed on the island of Oahu, and Hawaii native Maia Kealoha, now age 8, plays Lilo. She told *The Week Junior* she has been a fan of the original film since she was younger, and she feels "lucky to represent the people in Hawaii and our culture." She described Lilo as someone with "a big heart" who is "fun, creative, loves her *'ohana*, and can be a little naughty." During filming, Kealoha sometimes acted opposite a puppet version of Stitch, who is voiced by Chris Sanders. He voiced the alien in the original film and was its co-writer and co-director. He also directed *The Wild Robot*. Tia Carrere, who voiced animated Nani, appears in the live-action film as a new character, Mrs. Kekoa.

The film will teach people about kindness and the importance of family, Kealoha said. "Your *'ohana* might not be perfect, but you show them aloha (the Hawaiian word for love and friendship) and love them for who they are," she said.

3 more aliens on screen

E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial

This 1982 sci-fi classic is about a boy, Elliott, who befriends a stranded alien. They form a strong bond as Elliott and his friends try to protect the alien from scientists and help him get home.

The Iron Giant

In this 1999 animated film, a massive alien robot lands in a small town and meets a boy named Hogarth, who teaches him about humanity. The Iron Giant then has to help stop a missile from destroying the town.

Invader Zim

Eccentric alien Zim was at the center of this animated series that made its premiere in 2001. On a mission to conquer Earth, he disguises himself as a human child, but his plans are constantly foiled by a boy.

Frida Kahlo (left) and her painting My Dress Hangs There

Exhibit honoring a famous artist

An exhibition providing a special look at the life and works of famous Mexican artist Frida Kahlo recently opened at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) in Richmond. *Frida: Beyond the Myth*, which originated at the Dallas Museum of Art, contains more than 60 works of art, including paintings, drawings, and rare photographs taken by Kahlo's loved ones.

Kahlo was born in Mexico City and lived from1907 to 1954. She contracted polio (a disease that affects the nerves) as a child, and as a teen was in a bus accident that left her with lasting injuries. Painting helped her cope, and she became known for colorful self-portraits that conveyed her emotions, explored her identity, and addressed social issues.

Sarah G. Powers, a VMFA curator (person who selects art), told *The Week Junior* that although people may think they know Kahlo, "that image was something she carefully created." For example, in one self-portrait, she changed her birth year to 1910, the year of the Mexican Revolution. "She wanted to align herself with the revolutionary spirit of that time, and also because she was incredibly proud of her Mexican heritage," Powers said.

The look of the exhibition space was inspired by Kahlo's home, Casa Azul ("blue house" in Spanish), and has bright blue and gold walls. In one area, there is a floral backdrop where people can take their own Kahlo-inspired portraits. The space also features projections of the artist in the real world. "She's not just the posed image that we see in her self-portraits," Powers said. "She was someone who was alive, and she was very dynamic."

MAKING HISTORY
At a 2021 auction, a painting by Frida Kahlo sold for $34.9 million, the most expensive sale of a work by a Latin American artist.

READER RECOMMENDS

The Penguins of Madagascar (Available to rent or buy on all major platforms)

"This is my favorite show. It's based on characters from the Madagascar **films and is about four military commando spy penguins on a mission to fight crime. Skipper is the leader, Kowalski is the brains, Rico is the muscles, and Private is the naive and optimistic rookie. Their lives are filled with wacky adventures and hilarious events. Every episode is like a delightful dose of medicine to cheer me up! Whether you're a kid or not, this show is perfect for the whole family to watch together!" Katie, 11, Texas**

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to hello@theweekjunior.com.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST

Secrets of the Zoo Down Under
(Disney+) (National Geographic)

This series offers a behind-the-scenes look at zoos around the world. The latest season visits Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia, home to more than 5,000 creatures. Follow its team of vets and keepers as they treat a lioness's toothache, a sick baby platypus, and study koala populations.

Air Force Elite: Thunderbirds
(Netflix)

One of the world's oldest formal flying aerobatic teams is the Thunderbirds of the US Air Force. In this first-ever look inside its operations, you'll see the team perform high-speed maneuvers in F-16 fighter jets and learn about the intense training that goes into being part of the elite squadron.

Star Wars: Tales of the Underworld
(Disney+)

There is a new installment in the animated Star Wars anthology series that includes *Tales of the Jedi* and *Tales of the Empire*. This one has shorts that revolve around villains from the galaxy's criminal world: former assassin and bounty hunter Asajj Ventress and outlaw Cad Bane.

VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (2); DISNEY; NETFLIX; LUCASFILM; ALAMY; ON LEFT PAGE: DISNEY; GETTY IMAGES; ALAMY (2); NETFLIX

Crashlands 2

Build a life in an alien world

Crashlands 2 is a new sci-fi crafting survival game. It was recently released for the PC, iPhone, and iPad.

The first Crashlands came out in 2016. Fans liked its silliness, combat, and unique style. The story began with intergalactic trucker Flux Dabes and her robot, JuiceBox, stranded on the alien planet of Woanope. As in most role-playing and simulation games, players had to collect items and build structures. However, the game ignored the usual rules about gathering, storing, and using all your supplies and weapons, making for a faster and easier adventure.

That feature is back in Crashlands 2, as is Flux. This time, she is trying to go back to Woanope when a giant blast zaps her ship and sends her off course. Once again, she finds herself stranded with no supplies. Luckily, the environment is rich with wildlife and unusual items, and Flux knows how to build like an expert.

An alien creature

The game has three modes—Chill, Adventure, and Challenge—so you can choose to focus more on action or Flux's home life and friendships. Her home base is customizable, and you can help her find eggs of creatures that she can raise as pets. The game's combat system, meanwhile, encourages making weird and outrageous weapons. They might fling items, trap baddies, or blow them up with fish. The game also has new controls, allowing Flux to dodge and roll, surprise attack enemies, and even go invisible.

There are also mysteries to solve on Woanope. By working with some of the aliens, Flux will be able to help save the planet.

PODCAST OF THE WEEK

LIVE FROM MOUNT OLYMPUS: THESEUS & ARIADNE

Major podcast platforms

The new season of this award-winning series based on Greek myths follows Prince Theseus and Princess Ariadne as they try to save a group of young Athenians who are set to be sacrificed to the Minotaur, a half-bull, half-human monster.

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

PERPETUAL OCEAN 2: WESTERN BOUNDARY CURRENTS

tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Ocean

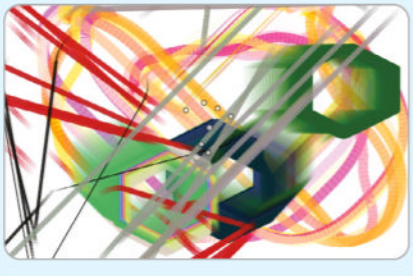
NASA's Scientific Visualization Studio has created a 3D visualization of Earth using ocean data. As you watch the globe rotate, you'll see how certain ocean currents flow, including the Gulf Stream along the East Coast of the US.

CHANNEL OF THE WEEK

BOMOMO

bomomo.com

Start with a blank page on this site, then use its color palette, variety of drawing tools, and brush designs to make a fun piece of digital art. You can doodle or create patterns in different shapes and sizes. When you are finished, you can download and share your completed work.



BUTTERSCOTCH SHENANIGANS (2); THE ONASSIS FOUNDATION; NASA; BOMOMO

BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Lemonade War

By Jacqueline Davies, illustrated by Karen De La Vega

(Clarion Books)

This best-selling book from 2007 has been turned into an exciting graphic novel. When the new school year begins, Jessie is going to skip third grade and will be in the same grade as her brother, Evan. This news shifts their sibling rivalry into high gear over the summer. Evan, who struggles with math and spelling, decides he wants to beat his sister at something. They make a bet to see who can earn the most money selling lemonade during the last five days of summer break. They agree that "winner takes all," so the sibling who loses must give up all their earnings. Jessie and Evan each set up lemonade stands in town, using different business strategies. For instance, Evan undersells the lemonade, pricing it at 10 cents per glass, but adults pay him more because they think he's being generous. Jessie starts a franchise, recruiting other kids to sell her lemonade in their neighborhoods and split the earnings with her. Toward the end, Jessie and Evan both begin using unfair tactics. Will the result be sour or sweet? Comic panels bring to life the calculations they make to see how much lemonade they must sell to win.

ASK THE AUTHOR

Jacqueline Davies

We spoke to the author of the Book of the Week.

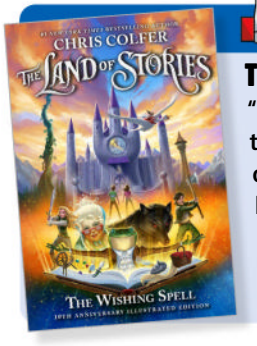
Did you start a business when you were a child?
I had a lemonade stand in my neighborhood, and that was a big thing! After I learned to sew, I created crafts that I would sell at my local consignment shop.

Are there any lessons you hope kids will take away from the story?
I don't write a book to teach a lesson. I try to write a story that feels engaging, truthful, and important.

Are there any classic books you love most?
Charlotte's Web by E.B. White and *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott.

What is your favorite activity to do in the summer?
Reading is always nice, but reading in a hammock in the summertime is especially nice. I also like to go swimming and hiking.

Lemonade or iced tea?
Lemonade!



COURTESY THE PUBLISHERS; JACQUELINE DAVIES; GETTY IMAGES

READER RECOMMENDS

The Wishing Spell *By Chris Colfer*

"This book is part of The Land of Stories series, which features twins named Alex and Conner. They are transported into a book of fairy tales where they experience magic and wonder. They have cool adventures that involve classic characters, such as Snow White and Goldilocks. But getting home turns out to be harder than they thought it would be." Allaina, 9, Virginia

Do you have a book to recommend? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

4 books that are set in New York City

These mysteries and adventures bring the Big Apple to life in exciting ways.

Doodles from the Boogie Down

By Stephanie Rodriguez

(Kokila)

In this graphic novel partially based on the author's life, Steph, who lives in the Bronx, wants to attend an arts school in another part of the city. Her mother doesn't approve, so Steph hatches a plan but doesn't think through the consequences. *Ages 9–12*

Liar & Spy

By Rebecca Stead

(Yearling)

Georges, a seventh grader, moves to an apartment building in Brooklyn and quickly becomes friends with a 12-year-old named Safer, who claims to be a spy. They team up to investigate a mysterious tenant in the building. But then the adventure takes an unexpected twist for Georges. Can he trust Safer? *Ages 10 and up*

Under the Egg

By Laura Marx Fitzgerald

(Rocky Pond Books)

When a girl spills rubbing alcohol on her late grandfather's painting of an egg, she notices there is another painting underneath it. She thinks the work may be stolen because her grandfather used to be a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Is it a masterpiece? This story is an intriguing mystery. *Ages 8–12*

The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street

By Karina Yan Glaser

(Clarion Books)

This first book in a memorable seven-book series introduces a big family named the Vanderbeekers, who live in a brownstone in Harlem. When their landlord refuses to renew their lease, the five siblings have 11 days to change his mind. The story is funny and heartwarming! *Ages 8–12*

DID YOU KNOW?
The tallest basil plant in the world grew to be nearly 11 feet high.

Grow an herb garden

You don't need gardening experience or a lot of space to enjoy this hobby.

Herbs are plants that have leaves, seeds, or flowers and can be used for many purposes. Some, such as lavender, are used in products to help people sleep more soundly. Others, like aloe vera, can help heal cuts and burns. Many herbs are also used in cooking. These plants are easy to grow, can thrive inside or outside, and can be grown in a container or garden. Here is how to plant your own herb garden.

Make your choices

Decide which herbs to grow. If you and your family like to cook with certain herbs, you may want to start with those. You can buy seeds or seedlings (young plants) at a local nursery (a store that sells plants), or you can order them online.

You can pick your own herbs.

Get started

If you're using seeds, cut the lid off an empty egg carton. Fill each section halfway with potting soil. Place one or two seeds in each section. Cover the seeds with a little more soil, and water them gently. Loosely wind plastic wrap around the egg carton to trap moisture, and put it by a sunny window. If you're using seedlings, you can skip this step.

Plant the herbs

Once seedlings have four or five leaves on their stem, they are ready to be planted. You can plant them in a garden or in containers with drainage holes. (Place indoor containers on a tray.) Choose a spot that gets five to six hours of sunlight a day. Dig a hole in the ground or about two inches below the rim of your container. Gently lift the seedling and its roots and soil and place it in the hole. Fill with soil, and water it right away. Repeat until all the seedlings are planted.

Water and weed

Continue to water herbs as needed. They grow best when the soil is slightly moist but not super wet. A good test: Feel the top inch of soil. If it feels dry, add water. If you see weeds, gently pull them out by their roots. Some herbs need trimming. Plants like basil and cilantro will grow bigger if you cut off the top leaves before they flower.

Enjoy your harvest

The best part about herbs is you can snip a few leaves for recipes while the plant continues to grow. Stir cilantro and oregano into store-bought salsa to add flavor. For more ideas, see the suggestions at right.

Easy herbs to try

Here are three of the most popular herbs and some of the many ways you can enjoy them.

Basil **When this plant has at least four sets of leaves, you can begin picking them. You can tear basil leaves to put on pizza, use them to make a pesto sauce, or pair them with tomato slices.**

Chives **are ready to harvest when their grass-like leaves are about six inches high. Chopped chives can be sprinkled over dishes like scrambled eggs, soups, omelets, and potatoes.**

Parsley **is ready to be picked when its leaves have at least three segments. Add chopped parsley to pasta, salads, or roasted vegetables. A sprig of parsley can also dress up a dish!**

MINI ME
Mini bell peppers—also known as mini sweet peppers or mini sweeties—are small versions of traditional bell peppers.

WARNING!
Ask an adult's permission before using the oven.

Bake up pepperoni pizza pepper poppers

Ingredients

- 6 mini bell peppers
- ¼ cup pizza sauce
- 1 cup grated mozzarella cheese
- 2 ounces pepperoni, chopped
- Optional toppings: olives, fresh basil, corn, chopped jalapeños or tomatoes, marinated artichokes, ricotta cheese, pre-cooked chopped or shredded chicken

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 400° F. Rinse the mini bell peppers, then halve each lengthwise. Scoop out the peppers' membranes (the white part inside) and seeds and discard.
2. Arrange the peppers with the cut side facing up on a baking sheet. If a pepper leans too much to one side, you can help keep it propped upright with the support of a small ball of aluminum foil.
3. Spoon 1 teaspoon pizza sauce into each pepper. Top with a sprinkling of cheese and pepperoni. You can also use other toppings of your choice (see ingredients).
4. With an adult's help, bake the mini peppers until the cheese is melted and bubbly and the peppers have softened, about 7 minutes.
5. Remove peppers from oven and let cool slightly before eating. Makes 3 servings.

LIFE HACK MAKE YOUR FRIENDS LAUGH

Laughing with others is a way to connect and to relieve stress. One way to get a laugh is to share a joke. You can find inspiration at the library—ask a librarian to direct you to joke books for kids—or ask a parent to help you search jokes for kids online. You can memorize jokes you find or use them to help inspire your own. Think about who you will be telling the joke to and what they might find humorous. For example, a joke about Minecraft might be funnier to a friend than to a grandparent. Regardless of whom you're addressing, jokes should not be unkind or hurt feelings. Practice telling your joke in a mirror or with a friend. Once you are ready, try it out on your friends and family.

Practice jokes with a friend!

GETTY IMAGES (4); JOY HOWARD

Word search

Can you find all these things with holes in them? They are hidden horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and can be forward or backward. When you're done, read the remaining letters to get a bonus message.

BAGEL
BEADS
BELT
BUTTON
DONUT
FLAT TIRE
FLUTE
GOLF COURSE
GRATER
GUITAR
HALO
JEANS
KEY
LACE
LOOSELEAF PAPER
MASK
NEEDLE
OLD SHOE
OUTLET
RING
SALT SHAKER
SIEVE
SPONGE
SWISS CHEESE
WIFFLE BALL
ZERO

					E	I	N	E	T	S				
			E	S	R	U	O	C	F	L	O	G		
		K	D	G	U	I	T	A	R	T	E	E	O	
	J	A	S	I	O	U	T	L	E	T	S	B	L	N
	E	E	S	A	L	T	S	H	A	K	E	R	D	F
B	A	R	O	W	M					R	E	E	S	S	A
U	N	I	W	I							H	B	H	U	O
T	S	T	T	F							C	D	O	R	O
T	U	T	B	F							S	I	E	V	E
O	L	A	H	L							S	Z	T	E	T
N	D	L	B	E	L					R	I	N	G	U	S
	E	F	A	B	C	K	B	H	O	Y	W	L	N	P	
	R	E	P	A	P	F	A	E	L	E	S	O	O	L	
		E	D	L	S	E	G	X	I	K	D	N	S		
			T	L	E	R	E	T	A	R	G	D			
					E	F	L	U	T	E					

FOUR IN A ROW

Place four of the letters below to complete the first pair of words, in the same order in both words. Use the remaining four letters to complete the second pair of words, in the same order in both words.

I N O P R T U V

O _ T S _ _ K E _
C O _ _ _ _

_ E _ S A _ _ L E
A D _ E _ _ _ S E

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Fill in the blanks in each sentence with two words so the second word is the same as the first word with a letter inserted into the exact middle, like REAL and REGAL. (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

1. I couldn't microwave the leftovers from my ___ ___ ___ ___ because the aluminum takeout tin is made out of ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ .
2. I'll bring some ointment just in ___ ___ ___ ___ we hike through poison ivy, since that can ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ your skin to get itchy.
3. The doctor received a ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ on a device she invented that could help every ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ who checked into the hospital.

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

Out of order

The numbers 1 to 9 can fit, one per square, so that no two consecutive numbers are in squares that touch in any way, even at a corner. Use the numbers already given to figure out where the rest of the numbers go.

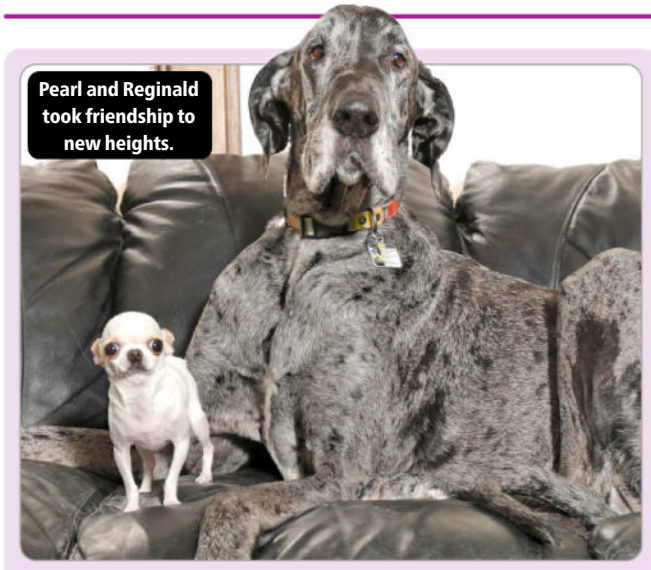
6		
	4	8

Spot the difference

These two pictures of flamingo cupcakes appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?

PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

Fill in the blanks hint: The words in sentence 3 begin with P.


Pearl and Reginald took friendship to new heights.

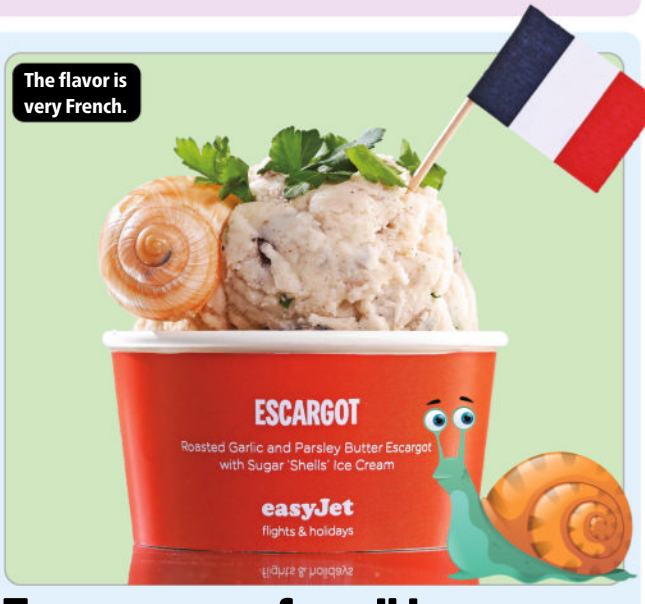
When opposite sizes attract

It was a match made in world record heaven when the tallest and shortest dogs met for a playdate. More than 3 feet tall at the shoulders, Reginald, a Great Dane, towers over Pearl, a chihuahua who stands 3.5 inches high. But "they have more similarities than differences," Reginald's owner said. When the pair met, they wagged their tails in excitement. Reginald swooped down to meet Pearl at eye level, and then the pups ran around together. "It was a really fun and exciting day," said Pearl's owner.

The BBQ ball pit

Celebrating a favorite cuisine

Fire up the grills! The first museum dedicated to barbecue has opened to the public. Located in Kansas City, Missouri, which also has the Barbecue Hall of Fame and more than 100 barbecue restaurants, the Museum of BBQ teaches visitors about a classic American cuisine. For those who like to play with their food, the meaty museum also features a ball pit that looks like it's filled with 8,000 baked beans. "Barbecue is really about people and about culture," said founder Jonathan Bender. "It's about celebrating and being together."



The flavor is very French.

Try a scoop of snail ice cream

As a special treat for passengers heading to Paris, France, the UK-based airline EasyJet is serving snail and garlic ice cream at London Southend Airport. The "jet-lato" is inspired by escargot, the classic French dish of snails cooked in garlic and butter. To create the ice cream flavor, EasyJet even included crunchy pieces of sugar to mimic a snail's shell. Other flavors offered to flyers include Portuguese custard tart, spicy tagine inspired by North Africa, and the Italian pasta dish cacio e pepe.

Is fossil fashion roaring onto the scene?

Welcome to Jurassic Purse

Three European companies have teamed up to make luxury handbags from dinosaur skin. Researchers plan to create leather purses using collagen, a protein that provides structure to skin, from Tyrannosaurus rex fossils. A project leader said, "We're unlocking the potential to engineer leather from prehistoric species, starting with the formidable T. rex." Besides looking snazzy, they say it will be "cruelty-free" and will benefit the environment by replacing traditional cowhide. Is this story real, or have you been t-ricked?*

*Reall The team is trying to create the first leather ever made from an extinct species. Many experts doubt they'll succeed, however, since now well-preserved T. rex skin has been found and they would have to use collagen from bones.

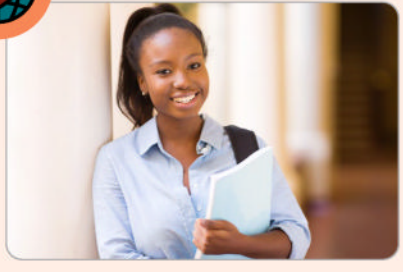
GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS; MUSEUM OF BARBEQUE; SWNS; VML CREATIVE AGENCY; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4)

Editor's note

This week I was interested to read about the first-ever Global Flourishing Study (p3). The goal of the research was to assess people's well-being in six areas, including happiness, health, social relationships, and financial stability. Getting the answers was a huge undertaking. Researchers from around the world enrolled more than 200,000 participants in 22 countries, representing a wide variety of backgrounds, languages, incomes, and living conditions. Analysis of the data will continue for years to come, but what is known so far is noteworthy. It turns out that something we often hear—that money doesn't guarantee happiness—is true. I hope you enjoy reading about the study and that it might even lead to discussions among your friends and family. Here's a conversation starter: What do you think you need to flourish in your life?

Andrea Barbalich
Editorial Director

CHARITY OF THE WEEK



"I Have a Dream" Foundation

This organization's goal is for all children in the US to get the education they deserve and reach their full potential. Since 1981, it has provided long-term support to more than 20,000 students and their families by raising money to help pupils stay in school and afford college. Mentors also offer advice and guidance. Find out more at ihaveadreamfoundation.org.

"I HAVE A DREAM" FOUNDATION® Educate. Empower. Achieve.

A fan of papercrafting

Shaurya, 11, Texas

"I enjoy papercrafting. It is when you make realistic models of things using paper-folding techniques. I have also always loved airplanes, and I dream of becoming a pilot. Even though my favorite thing to papercraft is planes, I have created a wide variety of vehicles like tanks, cars, and trucks using this method. I am in the process of creating a website so I can sell my models and use some of the money I earn to give back to the community. One of my goals is to start a club for papercrafting at my middle school to inspire other kids around me. I'm pictured here with one of my favorite model planes, a Vietnam Airlines Boeing 777-200 ER (Extended Range)."

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

How is a penny like some birds on a fence?

Heads on one side, tails on the other

International photo contest opportunity

The Standard Chartered Young Weather Photographer of the Year contest is being held by The Royal Meteorological Society in partnership with *The Week Junior Science+Nature* magazine in the UK. Anyone under age 18 from around the world can submit photos they have taken that capture the wonders of the weather or any signs of climate change. The contest is free to enter, and the deadline for submissions is June 19. You can find out more about the terms and conditions for applying at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-SN-Mets.

Jamie McBean won the 2023 contest with this photo of mammatus clouds at sunset in Kent, UK.

THE WEEK Junior **IT'S YOUR TURN** Email your news, views, and photos to *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

Your turn

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.

"I love reading *The Week Junior* with the horses at the barn." Tali, 9, Washington, DC

"My family and I made the raspberry Italian cream soda recipe and loved it." Thatcher, 10, Indiana

"I love *The Week Junior* and do a happy dance when it arrives! I was excited to see Sybil Ludington mentioned because I just read a book about her." Vivienne, 8, Illinois

Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Mr. Boyer**

School: **Murray Middle School**

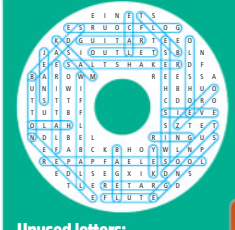
"We recently had something really sad happen at our school. The health teacher, Mr. Boyer, passed away from cancer. I want to nominate him for Teacher of the Week because he really connected with his students and made learning enjoyable and fun. I think it would bring lots of kids at my school some light during this time."

Siri, 12, Minnesota

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES; JAMIE MCBEAN

Puzzle answers (from page 26)



Four in a row
outspoken, coupon
versatile, advertise

Fill in the blanks
1. meal, metal
2. case, cause
3. patent, patient

Unused letters:
Einstein foresaw but doubted black holes existed.

6	3	5
9		1
7	4	8
		2

Quiz answers (from page 30) **1** c) Oahu **2** True **3** Barbecue **4** c) Chicago White Sox **5** Wasp **6** a) Gabby Douglas **7** True **8** Woanope **9** a) Ella Langley **10** False. The woman was buried next to her brother. **11** b) Marañón **12** Four **13** b) 90 **14** False. Jessie is going to skip third grade. **15** Pet Gala

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 On which Hawaiian island was the Lilo & Stitch live-action remake filmed?

a) Kauai b) Molokai c) Oahu

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

2 True or false? Scientists recently caught a colossal squid on camera for the first time.

True ☐ False ☐

3 The first museum dedicated to what kind of food recently opened in Kansas City, Missouri?

4 What Major League Baseball team does Pope Leo XIV root for?

a) Boston Red Sox

b) Chicago Cubs

c) Chicago White Sox

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

5 What kind of extinct insect did scientists find in amber and describe as "peculiar-looking" and a "weirdo"?

6 Which athlete was a part of the US Olympic Hall of Fame Class of 2025?

a) Gabby Douglas b) Jesse Owens

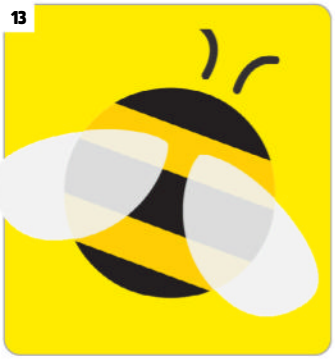
c) Peggy Fleming

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

7 True or false? The artist Frida Kahlo was born in Mexico City in 1907.

True ☐ False ☐

8 In the video game Crashlands 2, what planet is Flux trying to return to?



ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

9 Who won the most awards at the 60th Academy of Country Music Awards?

a) Ella Langley

b) Lainey Wilson

c) Reba McEntire

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

10 True or false? Scientists recently reconstructed the face of a woman in ancient Greece who was buried next to her husband.

True ☐ False ☐

11 Mari Luz Canaquiri Murayari won a legal battle to protect what sacred river in Peru?

a) Mantaro b) Marañón

c) Urubamba

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

12 A hockey game between the Montreal Victoire and Ottawa Charge in the PWHL playoffs took how many overtimes?

13 How many seconds do spellers at the Scripps National Spelling Bee have to pronounce a word, spell it, and pronounce it again?

a) 60 b) 90 c) 120

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

14 True or false? In the graphic novel The Lemonade War, Evan is going to skip third grade.

True ☐ False ☐

15 What event did New York University recently hold that featured pets dressed up in stylish outfits?

THE WEEK Junior

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The most brilliant part about being a co-founder is seeing our drinks sitting on store shelves—I still get butterflies every time I spot them! It's like watching your favorite drawing come to life—but better because you can actually drink it!

When I'm not busy creating new doodles or thinking up drink ideas, you'll find me on the soccer field. I absolutely love traveling around for matches—it's really exciting! What's especially cool is how both soccer and running a business teach you similar things—like working on a team and never giving up, even when things get challenging!"

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